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The Pilgrim Fathers in Holland

Their Condition, and their Relation to and Treatment by the Authorities and the People, with Special Reference to the Proposed Monument at Delfshaven

A Paper read before the New England Historic Genealogical Society, on March 4, 1891

BY

WILLIAM C. WINSLOW, D.D., D.C.L., LL.D.

BOSTON AND CHICAGO

Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society

This paper was prepared to be read before the New England Historic Genealogical Society, and not for the press; but as that Society desires a copy for its archives, requests for its publication have come from various quarters, and as public attention is largely directed to the project of erecting a monument at Delfshaven, I willingly place the manuscript in the hands of the Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society.

I would like to append many more footnotes and notes to further illustrate the subject, but my limited space, in a paper intended for the general reader, forbids the wish.

W. C. W.

Boston, March 18, 1891.

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THE PILGRIM FATHERS IN HOLLAND.

IN his discourse before the Massachusetts Historical Society at the celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the New England Confederation of 1643, John Quincy Adams remarks: "The New England Confederation originated in the Plymouth Colony, and was probably suggested to them by the example which they had witnessed, and under which they had lived several years, in the United Netherlands."[1]

In his diplomatic mission to England in 1635 to defend the colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts against the accusations of Thomas Morton, and to represent to the government the encroachments of the French and the Dutch, Edward Winslow seems to have had in mind some such union of the New England colonies, by his petition to the royal commission for a special warrant to the colonies "to right and defend themselves against all foreign enemies."

The formation *de facto* of the New England Confederation was undoubtedly caused by the exigencies of the situation, the colonies of Connecticut and New Haven moving earnestly for it, through fear of the Dutch in the New Netherlands; but we may well believe that the valuable lesson of confederation as exemplified in Holland was not lost upon the New England colonies, especially upon Plymouth. To commemorate the wholesome lesson to the world and to our forefathers in particular, the toleration to the Pilgrims in the Netherlands denied them in England, and the noble lives of the Pilgrims in Holland, tablet and monument may fittingly perform a grateful office in Leyden and Delfshaven.

[1] See note A.

To erect a monument is one thing: to suitably inscribe it is quite another matter. The inscription which records the events or circumstances of history, in connection with national or individual life, should be uninspired by fancy or uncolored by romance. For monumental history has a peculiar importance; many, who seldom or never read a page of history, see the chiseled or cast inscription of a monument, be it in Lexington or Trafalgar Square or Leyden; children often catch an enduring impression from a monumental record; to the scholar and others who by research find an inscription untrue to history, the words become "as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

This paper is particularly prompted by an earnest and widely known project to erect at Delfshaven a monument of gratitude to the Dutch for their generous hospitality to our Pilgrim Fathers, and of our appreciation of both Dutch and their guests in Holland; and also by criticisms of the project by eminent authorities.

The Congregational Club of Boston adopted the resolution, "that the club heartily approves of the erection of such a commemorative monument," with this preamble:—

Whereas, Remembering the hospitality of the free republic of Holland so generously bestowed upon the Pilgrims, who, after twelve years' residence in Amsterdam and Leyden, sailed from Delfshaven on a voyage which was completed at Plymouth Rock, it is fitting that we, members of Congregational clubs throughout the United States, should unite in grateful recognition of Dutch hospitality, and at Delfshaven raise some durable token of our appreciation of both hosts and guests — calling upon all Americans who honor alike the principles and the founders of the two republics to join in the enterprise. Therefore be it, etc.

In their circular the club state: "It is proposed to interest all societies and individuals in the enterprise;" and in another circular, say, "All are invited to contribute. The amount needed is twenty-five thousand dollars — equal, it is believed by experts, to sixty thousand dollars when expended in materials upon the other side of the Atlantic."

The Connecticut Congregational Club, in an elaborate report through the chairman[1] of the committee to consider the project, say that "The Delfshaven monument postulates an historic error." The Congregationalist of November 6, 1890, by the hand of a great authority in New England colonial history, — the late Rev. Henry M. Dexter, D.D., LL.D., — declares: "We have no money to waste upon any monument, whether at Delfshaven or elsewhere, in commemoration of a fancy which is in the face of history."

The Rev. Daniel Van Pelt, in The Christian Intelligencer of January 28, 1891, intimates that Dr. Dexter should have taken to the scheme "with peculiar kindliness." But love for the Pilgrims or any race of heroes never historically blinds the true scholar in his researches after light upon disputed points in their lives or in the transactions of a nation. The most useful members of our historical societies are those rare spirits who are ready, if needs be, on behalf of accuracy to declare against their own inclinations. Such men represent the historic spirit in its highest embodiment.

The Netherlands afforded a shelter from persecution to various sects when, in 1608, the Scrooby Independents, under Rev. John Robinson, left England for Amsterdam. For political and commercial as well as religious reasons the Dutch government gladly received sturdy, industrious, law-abiding communities, and Protestant in faith, as desirable accessions to the population. When therefore the Pilgrims at Amsterdam, in 1609, applied to the municipal authorities of Leyden for permission to settle in that city, for the purpose of "carrying on their trades, without being a burden in the least to any one," their reply was as follows: "The court, in making a disposition of this present memorial, declare that they refuse no honest persons free ingress to come and have their residence in this city, provided that such persons behave themselves and submit to the laws and ordinances; and therefore the coming of the memorialists will be agreeable and welcome."

[1] The Rev. Dr. G. L. Walker, of Hartford, in The Congregationalist of December 25, 1890.

Let us now revert to the Boston Congregational Club's preamble. It initially particularizes "the hospitality of the free republic of Holland so generously bestowed upon the Pilgrims" as a "fitting" reason why, "in grateful recognition of Dutch hospitality," a monument should be placed at Delfshaven to show "our appreciation of both hosts and guests." Not merely "the hospitality," but the hospitality "so generously bestowed," is the keynote reason why not merely Congregational clubs, but Americans generally, are asked to unite in grateful recognition of what? — the thrift, sobriety, patriotic unity, religious character and life of the Pilgrims in Holland? No; but of "Dutch hospitality." Does, then, such a monumeut postulate an historic error? Is it a fancy which is in the face of history?

There does not appear to be the slightest proof that "the free republic of Holland," through its government, welcomed or favored our fathers in any way, intentionally or actually. The municipal permission to settle at Leyden is simply a civil answer in the affirmative to the respectful and not unusual request of a body of artisans to take up their abode in a city of the Netherlands. But did the people of Leyden exemplify "Dutch hospitality" in various substantial tokens of good will and friendly interest "generously bestowed upon the Pilgrims"? With its manufactories and its bustling industries Leyden was indeed, as Governor Bradford puts it, one of those "fair and beautiful cities, flowing with abundance of all sorts of wealth and riches." It was the home of comfort and the seat of an already renowned university; so that refinement, as well as religion, exerted its purifying influences upon the rich burgher or prosperous tradesman. Now, to quote the words of Governor Winslow,[1] "considering, amongst many other inconveniences, how hard the country was where we lived, how many spent their estate in it and were forced to return to England," and considering the worth of the Robinson company in character and example, a question suggests itself. Was not Leyden, from 1610 to 1620, just the place and time for the rich

[1] Young's Chronicles of the Pilgrims, p. 381.

reformers and others to exercise not only "Dutch hospitality," but Dutch piety, towards their "guests"? And what better people to bestow the proofs of their hospitality and piety upon than these Pilgrims, who, like themselves, had been baptized as it were in the fires of persecution?

If there be a shining characteristic in the entire Pentateuch of the little Pilgrim commonwealth, — from 1610 to 1630, — it is the manifestation of the spirit of thankfulness and gratitude, whether it be for a few kernels of corn to each person for dinner, or whether it be for the arrival of a ship with stores of food and news from the mother land. Did, therefore, the Leydenese lavish hospitality upon them, or do them special favors in business, in society, in a religious way, we may be sure that Bradford and Winslow, and the various letters from Robinson and his flock to the Plymouth people, would, to say the least, have recorded such good deeds. As we shall see, both Bradford and Winslow endeavor to show that the Pilgrims were held in high estimation by the occurrences they recite to prove it.

Let us turn to the historical argument.

In 1627, when the question of Dutch encroachment upon the trade of New England stirred the little colony at Plymouth, which ardently wished, while maintaining its rights, to be at peace, Bradford and his council had some diplomatic dealings with the Dutch authorities in the New Netherlands (now New York), who made, interlarded with congratulatory and adulatory phrases, propositions to trade and treat on other matters that were or might be in dispute. In their reply of March 19, the governor and council remark: "Yet are many of us further obliged by the good and courteous entreaty which we have found in your country; having lived there many years, with freedom and in good content, as also many of our friends do to this day; for which we and our children after us are bound to be thankful to your nation, and shall never forget the same, but shall heartily desire your good and prosperity, as our own forever." [1]

A few months later Isaac de Razier came to Plymouth on

[1] Massachusetts Historical Society, fourth series, iii, 224.

behalf of the Dutch settlers. Bradford's letter-book[1] says: "So, according to his request, we sent our boat for him, who came honorably attended with a noise of trumpeters." Whether "the noise of trumpeters" is meant as a bit of irony, to be taken in connection with the flattery of the previous communication from the Dutch, I know not; but Bradford's letter to the Council of New England in London says: "The effect of their letters being friendly and congratulatory, we answered them in like sort." *We answered them in like sort!*

There is nothing new under the sun, in the language of diplomacy. Bradford's comment on the proffers of trading and friendship is, "It was wholly sought of themselves," and again, "The which, though we knew it was with an eye to their own profit, yet we had reason both kindly to accept it and make use of it." Bradford wrote also to the Council in London: "For strength of men and fortification, they far exceed us, and all in this land." The superior power of the Dutch had its influence on the wise governor and his council in their diplomatic responses to their diplomatic overtures.

The Rev. Dr. George L. Walker comments: "One might as well read the correspondence of Mr. Bayard and Lord Salisbury on the fisheries dispute in forgetfulness of its diplomatic character, as this correspondence between the governor of Plymouth Colony and the New Netherland authorities." The Rev. Dr. John A. Todd thinks the sentences referred to are, on Bradford's part, "unquestionably a grateful recognition of 'Dutch hospitality' which the Pilgrims themselves deeply felt." Dr. Walker as heartily disapproves as Dr. Todd approves of a monument in recognition of Dutch hospitality.[2]

The pointed words of Winslow as to the hard condition of the fathers in Holland have been already quoted. Has Bradford a word on the brighter side? He says of their days at Amsterdam: "It was not long before they saw the

[1] Massachusetts Historical Society, vol. iii (year 1810), pp. 51–56.
[2] The Christian Intelligencer, January 21, February 11, 1891.

grim and griseled face of poverty coming on them like an armed man, with whom they must buckle and encounter, and from whom they could not fly." And with genuine Pilgrim pluck he adds: "But they were armed with faith and patience against him and all his encounters; and though they were sometimes foiled, yet by God's assistance they prevailed and got the victory." [1] Of their settlement at Leyden in 1609, he says: "But being now here pitched, they fell to such trades and employments as they best could, valuing peace and their spiritual comfort above any other riches whatsoever; and at length they came to raise a competent and comfortable living, and with hard and continual labor. Being thus settled, after many difficulties they continued many years in a comfortable condition, enjoying much sweet and delightful society and spiritual comfort together, in the ways of God." [2]

It was in January, 1611, that Robinson and others purchased a "large" house at a cost of $3,200 ($800 "down" and $125 a year thereafter), in which Robinson was to live, and where he probably held services. The first five years in Leyden, when friends with their private means joined them from England, were doubtless less "hard" to the Pilgrims than the last five years in that city. Bradford specifies the reasons why the fathers sought to leave Holland; with much candor he graphically records the arguments made against removal. Winslow, too, in his "Brief Narration," published in 1646, gives the causes for their emigration to New England. The testimony of these two men, as to the condition and life of the Pilgrims in Holland, is the most valuable that exists; indeed it is *the* testimony that does, or should, decide the points under discussion. Do either of them, in presenting the arguments for or against removing from Holland, furnish a single line to indicate that their little band in Leyden enjoyed a good measure of abundance or worldly prosperity? Does Bradford, in a single instance, on behalf of those opposed to emigration, specify as one of their reasons that of plenty and contentment in Holland? The

[1] Young, p. 33. [2] Idem, 35.

let-well-enough-alone plea has always had weight when questions of innovation or change are discussed in society or at home. Those who argued against leaving Holland uttered their refrain in this fashion: "Also, the like precedents of ill-success and lamentable miseries befallen others in like designs, were easy to be found and not forgotten to be alleged; besides their own experience in their former troubles and hardships in their removal into Holland, and how hard a thing it was for them to live in that strange place, although it was a neighbor's country, and a civil and rich commonwealth." [1] They evidently had hesitated about jumping from the Dutch frying-pan into the fire, somewhere else. "The like precedents of ill-success" referred to were probably the failure of the colony planted near the mouth of the Kennebec in 1607, and the rather discouraging progress of the settlements in Virginia.

Despite such examples presented, and the depicted barbarities of the Indians, such as the "flaying men alive with the shells of fishes, cutting off the joints and members of others by piecemeals, and broiling them on the coals, and causing men to eat the collops of their flesh in their sight whilst they live," [2] — despite all this a Pilgrim band was deliberately and harmoniously formed to leave Holland for a far-distant land. Bradford's memory of the day when they left the scenes of Leyden forever, and parted in sorrow at Delfshaven, finds expression in the sweet words, "They knew they were Pilgrims, and looked not much on those things, but lifted up their eyes to heaven, their dearest country, and quieted their spirits."

From Bradford's own summing up of the arguments, let us now present a few passages to show why the fathers left Holland: "And first, they found and saw by experience the hardness of the place and country to be such, as few in comparison would come to them, and fewer that would bide it out and continue with them. For many that came to them, and many more that desired to be with them, could not endure the great labor and hard fare, with other incon-

[1] Young, 50. [2] Idem, 49.

veniences, which they underwent and were contented with. . . . It was thought that if a better and easier place of living could be had, it would draw many and take away these discouragements; yea, their pastor would often say that many of those that both writ and preached now against them, if they were in a place where they might have liberty, and live comfortably, they would then practice as they did.

"2. They saw that, although the people generally bore all their difficulties very cheerfully and with a resolute courage, being in the best of their strength, yet old age began to come on some of them; and their great and continual labors, with other crosses and sorrows, hastened it before the time; so that it was not only probably thought, but apparently seen, that in a few years more they were in danger to scatter by necessity pressing them, or sink under their burdens, or both.

"3. . . . For many of their children, that were of best dispositions and gracious inclinations, having learned to bear the yoke in their youth, and willing to bear part of their parents' burden, were oftentimes so oppressed with their heavy labors that, although their minds were free and willing, yet their bodies bowed under the weight of the same, and became decrepit in their early youth; the vigor of nature being consumed in the very bud, as it were."[1] Near the close of this remarkable chapter, based on which another Everett might vividly depict their pre-Mayflower hardships, he pointedly says of the fathers in Holland: "They lived here but as men in exile and in a poor condition."

From the same unassailable authority one more selection, which relates to their spiritual estate: "For many, though they desired to enjoy the ordinances of God in their purity, and the liberty of the gospel with them, yet, alas, they admitted of bondage, with danger of conscience, rather than to endure these hardships; yea, some preferred and chose prisons in England rather than this liberty in Holland, with these afflictions." He perhaps recalled what he had said of their persecutions for conscience' sake in England: "For

[1] Young, 45–47.

some were taken and clapped up in prisons, others had their houses beset and watched night and day, and hardly escaped their hands." [1] Is there not a plain implication that Independency, or, as we would now say, Congregationalism, was unacceptable to the Reformed Church people in Leyden, and that some of the Robinson flock went so far as to say that they preferred an English prison to "this liberty in Holland, with these afflictions"? Bradford says, "chose prisons in England," but I think such "separatists" must have been the extremists only — such as would oppose many a service and practice of to-day in our Congregational churches as being formal or ritualistic.

Did the larger half of the flock, which remained at Leyden, fare better after the Pilgrims had gone? The letter-book of Bradford, so far as I have examined it, indicates nothing of the kind. Not only are there no means to send as succor, but little means to enable those who wish to go to Plymouth to do so. Under date of November 30, 1625, Francis Jessop and others, writing to Bradford and Brewster of their longing to be reunited, say, "So see we no hope of accomplishing the same except it come from you. . . . For ourselves, we are minded, as formerly, to come unto you when and as the Lord affordeth means; though we see little hope thereof at present, as being unable of ourselves, and that our friends will help us we see little hope." [2]

Thomas Blossom, on December 15, 1625, writes to Bradford of himself and others who had wished to remove to Plymouth: "For myself and all such others as have formerly minded coming, it is much what the same, if the Lord afford means. . . . If we come at all unto you, the means to enable us to so do must come from you." [3]

Winslow writes of their final decision at Leyden: "And hereupon we came to this resolution, That it was best for one part of the church to go at first, and the other to stay, namely, the youngest and strongest part to go. Secondly, they that went should freely offer themselves. Thirdly, if the major part went, the pastor to go with them; if not, the

[1] Young, 23 and 45. [2] Idem, 487–8. [3] Idem, 482.

elder only. Fourthly, if the Lord should frown upon our proceedings, then those that went to return, and the brethren that remained still there to assist and be helpful to them; but if God should be pleased to favor them that went, then they also should endeavor to help over such as were poor and ancient and willing to come."

Not one of the Pilgrims returned in the Mayflower to their brethren at Leyden. In 1629–30, a large part of the remnant of the Pilgrims emigrated, in two parties, to Plymouth, which cost the Plymouth Colony, including their "keep" till they could support themselves, about £1,000. "A few — there is some reason for including in the number Mrs. Robinson and several of her surviving children — gradually merged themselves in the Dutch church and community. By the year 1655 . . . all traces of the presence of the Scrooby men disappear from Leyden records and history."[1]

Were the fathers in Leyden worthy of sympathy and support? Thankful I am to be able to cull some brighter passages of their treatment from the Leydenese. Robert Baylie, of Glasgow, in his book, "A Dissuasive from the Errors of the Times," published in 1645, avers that the Dutch wearied of the Pilgrims, and that owing to the Pilgrims' disagreements the party was formed for emigration in 1620. Winslow, after utterly denying such a statement, says: "For I persuade myself, never people upon earth lived more lovingly together and parted more sweetly than we, the church at Leyden, did." And Bradford, in refuting such slanders, says: "I will therefore mention a particular or two to show the contrary and the good acceptation they had in the place. And, first, although it was low with many of them, yet their word would be taken amongst the Dutch (either bakers or others) when they wanted money, because they had found by experience how careful they were to keep their word, and saw them so painful and diligent in their callings, that they strove to get their custom and to employ them above others in their work, for their honesty and dili-

[1] Dr. Dexter, in The New England Magazine, September, 1889, p. 61.

gence. Again; the magistrates of the city, about the time of their coming away, or a little before, in the public place of justice, gave this commendable testimony of them, in reproof of the Walloons, who were of the French church in the city. 'These English,' said they, 'have lived amongst us now this twelve years and yet we never had any suit or accusation come against [any of] them. But your strifes and quarrels are continual.' "[1]

Bradford assuredly puts the case as strongly as possible in his endeavor to show that the Dutch respected the English colony, and, because of their honesty and diligence, employed them rather than others; but how thankfully for the Pilgrims' sake would he embrace the opportunity to record any signal marks of favor from the merchants, magistrates, or churches!

Robinson is also an important factor in our answer to the question we are now considering. Even Baylie, who so disparaged the Pilgrims, is constrained to admit that "Master Robinson was the most learned, polished, and modest spirit that ever that sect enjoyed."

The American public to-day, I think the larger number of Congregationalists, are not fully aware of the debt of gratitude Congregationalism owes to the chief scholar and spiritual head of the little band in Leyden. Had he come over in the Mayflower, the historical quartet would have been a quintet, and of Bradford, Winslow, Brewster, Standish, Robinson, the last would not have been the least. Perhaps he would have taken Brewster's place altogether; for the executive, the diplomatic, the spiritual, and the martial needs — each and all essential to Plymouth — were represented by Bradford, Winslow, Brewster, and Standish respectively. Had Robinson come over in the Mayflower, what brighter halos of glory would now be about his *popular* portrait? To me his historical likeness is enough — that of a man who did *his* duty in remaining at Leyden. Let the bronze tablet record his work, and New England's memory of his worth, and her debt to him.

[1] Young, 380 and 39.

Winslow, referring to his daily disputations in the academy, in 1613, against Episcopius and others who supported Arminianism against Calvinism, says, "He had as great respect amongst them as any of their own divines." Bradford says: "The Lord did so help him to defend the truth and foil his adversary, as he put him (Episcopius) to an apparent nonplus in this great and public audience. And the like he did two or three times upon such like occasions; the which, as it caused many to praise God that the truth had so famous a victory, so it procured him much honor and respect from those learned men and others which loved the truth."[1] For Winslow, who joined the colony in 1617, the Pilgrims were in all probability indebted to Robinson's preaching and personal influence. Dr. Charles Deane truly[2] remarks that Winslow was "the most accomplished man" of the Plymouth Colony, and it requires no imagination to understand how his intellectual and spiritual nature received impressions for life from such a powerful and cultivated mind and such a moral and spiritual hero. When they parted at Delfshaven, Robinson was forty-five years old, Winslow but twenty-six.

How, long years after his revered teacher was in the grave, Winslow rejoiced, in his own moderation, to be able to write of him: "'T is true, I confess, he was more rigid in his course and way at first than toward his latter end"! And again: "I would have the reader take notice that, however the church of Leyden differed in some particulars, yet made no schism or separation from the reformed churches, but held communion with them occasionally."[3]

That Robinson did the Calvinistic party in the university and city a great and timely service is certain; and probably on this account, as well as his scholarship and ability, he was admitted to the privileges of the university in 1615. One of the "privileges," having something of the flavor of a Puritan barn-raising or Pilgrim "nightcap" in "ye olden days" of New England, entitled him to receive, free of town

[1] Young, 41.
[2] Massachusetts Historical Society, fourth series, vol. iii, 111.
[3] Note B.

and state duties, every month, half a tun of beer and every three months about ten gallons of wine.[1]

Winslow mentions an important event which bears directly upon our point, that Robinson is an important factor in the treatment the Pilgrims received. He says of Robinson: "When God took him away from them and us by death, the university and ministers of the city accompanied him to his grave with all their accustomed solemnities, bewailing the great loss that not only that particular church had, whereof he was pastor, but some of the chief of them sadly affirmed that all the churches of Christ sustained a loss by the death of that worthy instrument of the gospel." Mr. Sumner, who concludes, both from research and a personal study *in situ*, that the fathers were "far from experiencing any excess of kind attention and magisterial favor," discredits entirely Winslow's statement, just quoted. I am aware of Winslow's admiration for Robinson; that he was not present at the funeral; that he must have received such information by letter or hearsay; that he wrote twenty-six years after Robinson's death; but, nevertheless, I cannot agree with Sumner, whose argument rests on the grounds chiefly that Bradford does not allude to it, and that a plague, then raging in Leyden, would have caused the suspension of all public funerals. But Bradford and Winslow do not both necessarily mention matters of interest, such as the "large" house that Winslow denominates as Robinson's abode; or of importance, such as the portions of Robinson's farewell sermon, alone reported by Winslow. The death of Robinson occurred on March 1, the day of his funeral was on March 4, which indicates that there was no hasty interment; moreover, Roger White writes to Bradford of Robinson's illness, which lasted eight days, that he "was free of the plague, so that all his friends could come freely to him."[2]

I think it, therefore, no stretch of the imagination to suppose that the sorrow-smitten flock followed the precious

[1] On this and other points see the valuable notes appended to "Memoirs of the Pilgrims at Leyden." By George Sumner. Cambridge, Mass.: Metcalf & Co. 1845. Also published by Massachusetts Historical Society, third series, vol. ix.

[2] Young, 479.

remains of Robinson to their burial, and that in the train were members of the university, and ministers of the Reformed churches in the city. Nor is it unlikely that "accustomed solemnities," in part at least, were performed, such as the appointment of pall-bearers, ritual, committal, etc. And why otherwise? Robinson had espoused earnestly and triumphantly the Calvinistic cause; he was admired for his learning and ability; the integrity, industry, religious life of his flock were seen and known of all. Why should not such respect have been paid to his memory? In showing, as Sumner concludes, that "the condition of the Pilgrims while in Holland was one of poverty and obscurity," he should not detract from a single one of the brighter passages in their biography as transmitted us by Bradford or Winslow. I think the positive words of the latter, with the qualifications which I have attached to them, quite conclusive.

Only an affirmative answer can be given to our question, Were the fathers in Leyden worthy of sympathy and support? They were not only at peace and good will among themselves, but evinced a kindly fellowship towards the Reformed churches; they were not only not "a burden in the least to any one," but a desirable addition to the breadwinning class of the city; they not only did their artisan work well, but so well as to take precedence over other artisans about them; they had not only a most capable and highly respected leader, but one who was so able as to render a distinguished service to the university and Calvinistic party; they had not only been persecuted for liberty and conscience' sake, but the Netherlands, Leyden, their Reformed Church neighbors, had paid the same penalty, and as a logical and scriptural result (in connection with the foregoing circumstances) a large practical sympathy and much favor should have been shown them by government, burgomasters, and neighbors.

The practical sympathy in any substantial form is not on record — how is it as to public favors? No church or public place for worship was ever granted them, such as the contemporaneous Presbyterian colony at Leyden, under Robert

Durie as pastor, had promptly conceded to them. Nor was Robinson's admission to the privileges of the university given till after a five or six years' residence: Durie arrived in 1609, and on April 27, 1610, was admitted to the university.

Dr. Dexter says that "during all of the residence of the Pilgrims in Holland the conduct of the Dutch government towards them was modified by its craven fear of offending" the English government. Dr. Walker says the conduct of the Dutch "was influenced by a craven fear of offending the English power." The chairman of the Boston Congregational Club committee, the Rev. Dr. W. E. Griffis, on this point remarks: "It may be that the Dutch government, in its unequal contest with Spain, did try hard to keep the peace with England and avoid war with this Protestant nation." But the words of Bradford not only throw historical light upon this immediate point, but they show that of public favors there were none for the Pilgrims. In speaking of the people of Leyden and Robinson, he says: "Yea, so far were they of being weary of him and his people, or desiring their absence, as that it was said by some, of no mean note, that were it not for giving offence to the State of England, they would have preferred him otherwise, if he would, and allowed them some public favor. Yea, when there was speech of removal into these parts (Plymouth), sundry of note and eminency of that nation would have had them come under them; and for that end made them large offers." Young's comment on these words of Bradford is incisive: "King James at this time exercised an unwarrantable influence in the Low Countries, both in civil and ecclesiastical affairs. He drove Vorstius from his professorship at Leyden for his heresies, and labored to procure his banishment; and prevented Ames from being elected to the same office." Palfrey judicially puts the case: "No public token of good will could be extended to them, for fear of offence to the English government." [1]

The offers made to the colony to emigrate, to which Bradford alludes, came to them from Amsterdam merchants,

[1] Palfrey, i, 142.

among others, who knew of their intention to leave Holland, but the government refused its protection. This straw but indicates the attitude of "the free republic" towards them, and, on the other hand, how high a respect the people had for their desirableness as colonists.

The flight of Brewster indicates the kind of surveillance exercised over the Pilgrims by the state. For printing and publishing non-conformist books[1] he fled for safety to some hiding place in England, where he remained in concealment or privacy till the departure for Plymouth. Sir Dudley Carleton, the English ambassador at The Hague, informed his government that the Dutch officer had arrested a man named Brewer for the offence; but it was found that Brewer had furnished the means for printing the books, and accordingly he was sent under arrest to England. Had Brewster stayed in Leyden he would have had an opportunity to compare the "hospitality" of a Dutch jail with that of the jail into which he was once "clapped up" in Lincolnshire, and again into which he would have been "clapped up" in England had he been in Brewer's place.

The extortionate terms which the Pilgrims were compelled to make with the merchant adventurers in London is a matter of familiar history, into whose details we need not enter. The English company knew their straits, and made the bond accordingly; but it is not refreshing to read that it was a society "aiming to do good, and to plant religion."[2] Palfrey remarks of the transaction with the Pilgrims, that "the hardship of the terms to which they were reduced shows at once the slenderness of their means and the constancy of their purpose." This pecuniary weakness in the performance of the greatest event of their lives — an event without which there would have been no historical Mayflower and Plymouth Rock — casts unfortunately a too true shadow upon their condition in Leyden.

The heroic devotion of the Pilgrims to a *principle* caused them to leave their own loved land for a land of strangers,

[1] Titles mentioned in Young, 467.

[2] Some of the merchants were, or became, very friendly to the colony, and a few of them joined it.

and then, to some extent, it impelled them to seek for a home in the wilderness. No record of the Pilgrims in printed page, or on inscribed shaft at Leyden, can justly leave blank their heroic superiority to adverse circumstances in Holland, as well as on "the Mayflower of a forlorn hope," and on "the ice-clad rocks of Plymouth." The heroism of the Pilgrims from 1620 to 1630 had its schooling from 1610 to 1620.

This consideration of direct and indirect contemporaneous evidence, which throws light upon the condition of the Pilgrims in Holland, is an historical investigation irrespective of our national friendship for the Dutch nation in the past, for the Dutch people of to-day, and for the Reformed Church of our land. The Reformed Churchman of New York, who writes a history of Massachusetts Bay Colony, does not love the Boston Congregationalist of to-day the less when he sketches the enormities of legally executing so-called witches. Nor should our consideration of how the fathers fared in Holland be decided by our own exalted appreciation of them. Could they speak, they too would wish their life in Leyden commemorated as it was, and not as we might wish it had been there.

Let us make a parallel illustration: A band of Russian refugees settle in New England in 1891. Early next century they remove to some distant land, where, two or three centuries later, they become a strong nation. They honestly lived, honorably earned their bread in New England. Moreover, they had a shelter, as a body, from Russian persecution. They saw in New England the blessings of freedom and education and a free gospel, and they applied the example in building up themselves into a nation. Now, in the year 2162, some of their number propose to erect in New England a monument, stating as the preamble to their resolution: "*Whereas*, Remembering the hospitality of the free republic of the United States so generously bestowed upon" our ancestors, "who, after twelve years' residence in" New England, "sailed from" Boston, etc. But others among

them, revering equally the memory of their fathers, ask for evidence of any special favor shown the fathers by the great American republic, such as other refugees from over the ocean did not freely receive. They ask if their ancestors did not earn their livelihood, and then their right, under its laws, to live in a land often described by its writers as an "asylum for the oppressed"? They think that the statement as to a monument, so historic in its character, should not postulate an historic error, but have a true historic basis.

It is of the highest importance that this enterprise be truly catholic and national: that not only the Boston and the Connecticut Congregational clubs, but all Congregationalists, and all admirers of the Pilgrim Fathers, may heartily approve of a monument, and many of them subscribe for it. The fathers' indebtedness to the Dutch — for toleration in Holland denied them in England, and for the valuable example of confederation — their unity, constancy, integrity, piety; their persistent purpose to sail for New England and its resolute execution, notwithstanding the obstacles which confronted them and the sacrifices demanded; these historical facts unitedly form material for a resolution, to which all who venerate the memory of the Pilgrim Fathers will add a hearty amen!

The proposed tablet to Robinson, the Pilgrim leader in Holland, should be placed on the wall of the church, beneath which were placed his remains. I believe some site near his house to be the spot, before all others in Holland, where should stand the chief monument to the Pilgrims. For here was the center of the scenes of their trials and rejoicings together in that land. The rock on which they first stepped when Plymouth had been chosen for their future home is not the site of the monument at Plymouth. Where their feet last pressed Dutch soil need not be designated for the elaborate memorial to commemorate their life in the Netherlands. At Delfshaven let some simpler remembrance, in stone and bronze, mark the place of the final departure of the Pilgrim Fathers — that farewell parting of brethren in "such love as indeed is seldom found

on earth" — of which one who sailed wrote with a pathos and a piety that stirs our souls to-day: —

"And when the ship was ready to carry us away the brethren that stayed having again solemnly sought the Lord with us and for us, and we further engaging ourselves mutually as before, they, I say, that stayed at Leyden feasted us that were to go at our pastor's house, being large; where we refreshed ourselves, after tears, with singing of psalms, making joyful melody in our hearts, as well as with the voice, there being many of the congregation very expert in music; and indeed it was the sweetest melody that ever mine ears heard. After this they accompanied us to Delph Haven, where we were to embark, and there feasted us again; and after prayer performed by our pastor, where a flood of tears was poured out, they accompanied us to the ship, but were not able to speak one to another for the abundance of sorrow to part. But, we only going aboard, we gave them a volley of small shot and three pieces of ordnance, and so, lifting up our hands to each other, and our hearts for each other to the Lord our God, we departed, and found his presence with us in the midst of our manifold straits he carried us through."

Was it in simple faith, or in prophetic vision, or both, that this writer, mindful of their trials at Leyden and Plymouth, yet rejoicing in hope, concluded his "Brief Narration" of these things in words most marvelously fulfilled? Said he: "None will ever be losers by following us so far as we follow Christ. Which that we may do, and our posterities after us, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father accept in Christ what is according to him; discover, pardon, and reform what is amiss amongst us; and guide us and them by the assistance of the Holy Ghost for time to come, till time shall be no more; that the Lord our God may still delight to dwell amongst his plantations and churches there by his gracious presence, and may go on blessing to bless them with heavenly blessings in these earthly places, that so by his blessing they may not only grow up to a NATION, but become exemplary for good unto others."

The lofty spirit of the Pilgrims, displayed from the day of their persecution in England till the foundations of Plymouth were securely laid, — so triumphant in trials and earthly separations, — has built them their monument in the hearts of their posterity forever. The visible effects of that spirit in our New England of this century inspired Webster to begin his oration at Plymouth with the words: "Let us rejoice that we behold this day."

NOTE A.

"This measure, the scheme of which had perhaps been derived from the Confederacy of the Low Countries, had been conceived several years before." — *Palfrey*, i, 623.

"By reason of the plottings of the Narragansetts (ever since the Pequot War) the Indians were drawn into a general conspiracy against the English . . . which made them enter into this more near union and confederation following." — *Bradford's History of Plymouth Colony*, in Massachusetts Historical Society, fourth series, vol. iii, 416.

"Winthrop tells us in his journal of August 31, 1637, that 'some of the magistrates and ministers of Connecticut being here, there was a day of meeting appointed to agree upon some articles of confederation.'" — *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, p. 235.

Rev. Dr. George L. Walker, in a note to me, remarks of the confederation: "It started with the western colonies and grew out of their natural fear of Dutch encroachments, isolated as they were from the stronger provinces on the eastern coast. I am open to light; but the natural exigencies of the situation rather than any remembrance of Netherland experiences seem to me the adequate explanation of the origin of the New England Confederacy."

NOTE B.

"For his doctrine, I living three years under his ministry before we began the work of plantation in New England, it was always against separation from any of the churches of Christ; professing and holding communion both with the French and Dutch churches, yea, tendering it to the Scotch also . . . ever holding forth how wary persons ought to be in separating from a church, and that till Christ the Lord departed wholly from it man ought not to leave it, only to bear witness against the corruption that was in it." — *Brief Narration.* [Young, 388.]

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